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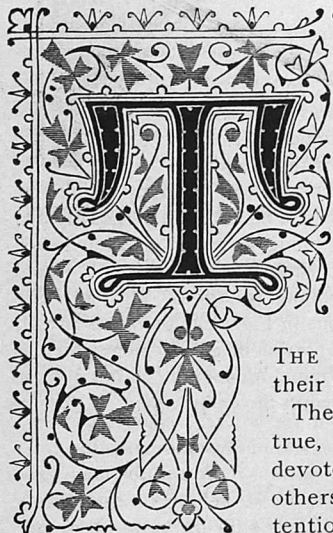
THE MUSICAL

CONDUCTED BY



AMATEUR

CARYL FLORIO



OMIT, in a publication like ours, the representation of the interests of so large and intelligent a class of art amateurs as the unprofessional musical persons of this country would be manifestly unjust. They need an organ, and

THE ART AMATEUR is at their service.

There are already, it is true, periodicals specially devoted to music, and many others which give some attention to it, but it is our design that the musical department of this paper shall occupy a field of importance which, strange to say, has hitherto been left vacant. Most of the journals treating of music do so from a professional stand-point, and in a manner which addresses itself principally to professionals; they demand that the reader shall possess a certain knowledge of technicalities, a certain theoretic cultivation which the larger number of amateurs find it impossible or inconvenient to attain. We propose to treat the subject in a manner which shall be intelligible and interesting to all, using technical terms as little as possible, and, when their use is unavoidable, explaining briefly such as are likely to be misunderstood.

It is our purpose to give a series of articles, illustrated by exercises and examples, on the science of music; and we hope thereby to succeed in showing our readers that the terrors of theoretic study—of Harmony and Counterpoint—lie not so much in the things themselves as in the unnecessary fogs with which professors (either for their own purposes, or from ignorance) usually enshroud them.

From time to time we shall give some simple, but good, piece of music, fitted for the home circle; a song, which the mother may teach her little ones; an instrumental composition, which the child may learn without injury to its taste; a piece of more ambitious form, which shall make our interested amateur study a little, which study we will help by a few explanatory words; and we may give occasionally some quartette or trio, in which the musical members of the family may join their voices. This music will all be carefully selected, with a view to purity of style, ease of performance, and pleasingness of melody.

It is our intention, also, to assist those troubled amateurs who visit the music stores for the purpose of replenishing their stock of pieces, but who, when there, can only vaguely ask for "something new," by giving from time to time a list of new publications, both vocal and instrumental, stating their grade of difficulty and, in the case of songs, the range of voice needed for their performance.

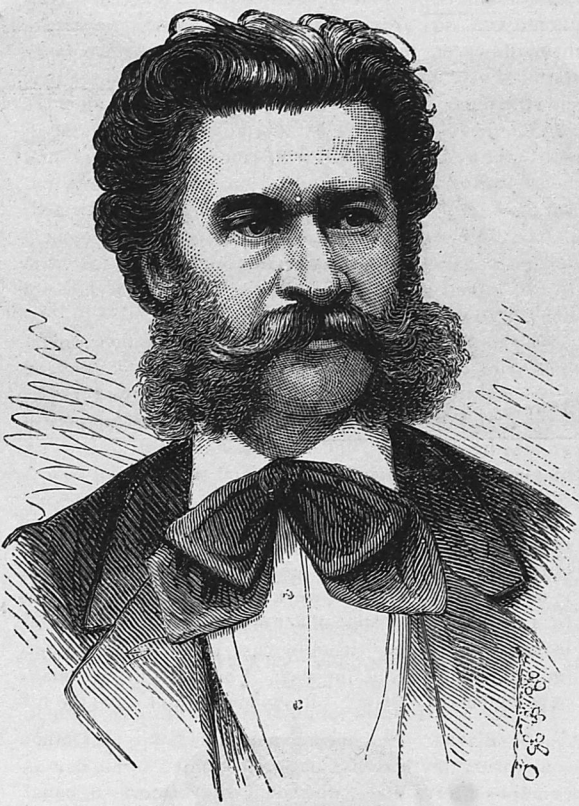
Brief biographies of well-known and favorite composers, accompanied by their portraits, will be given occasionally, a feature which doubtless will increase the pleasure taken in their compositions; for the work of a person about whom we know something has always in it an element of personality which is lacking when the name represents only a dry abstraction.

Short criticisms of important public performances and performers will find a place in this department. We know that amateur critics are generally glad of some assistance in determining the justice of their

own opinions, and as the success of our paper does not depend upon the favor of artists or managers, we can afford to be absolutely just in our comments, which we doubt not will be valued accordingly.

We shall make a feature of reporting deserving amateur performances, endeavoring to assist those who take part in them by encouraging words where praise is due, and kindly hints as to the best means of avoiding or conquering faults into which they may have fallen. The success of this feature of our musical department will necessarily depend largely upon the assistance we get from our readers. We specially request our friends to forward us notices and programmes of such performances as may be beyond our reach, and to enable us to send our reporters to attend such as are within visiting distance.

Our correspondence column will be found particularly interesting and instructive. Any of our readers are at liberty to send us questions relating to music or musical matters, and they may be sure they will be answered promptly and to the best of our ability.



JOHANN STRAUSS, THE COMPOSER. (See page 21.)

Lastly, we call the attention of that very large and estimable portion of the amateur musical fraternity, the leaders and singers in volunteer choirs throughout the country, to the fact that we hope to assist them materially in their work, and to this end shall give lists of music specially fitted for the various services in which they take part, or advice as to the easiest and quickest method of study for the pieces adopted. Among our contributors is a gentleman long connected with this branch of the profession, and the results of his valuable experience are free to any inquiring correspondent.

ABBE LISZT has consented to appear and play at a concert in aid of the sufferers from the terrible catastrophe at Szegedin. The great pianist has but rarely appeared as a conductor since his ordination, and never as a performer. Many who have heard him play and have watched his peculiar mannerisms, will be curious to know if he has abandoned them—such, for example, as his staring for a moment at the row of ladies nearest him before beginning his play—magnetizing them, so to speak—and many other little traits peculiar to him.

THE "KINDER-SYMPHONIE."

I.

ALTHOUGH our English-speaking race rejoices in comic songs and glees of broad humor, it cannot boast of much music in which the comic element lies in the composition itself, unaided by words. This sphere has been left almost entirely to the German composers, who originated it, from whom indeed we receive nearly all our best purely instrumental works. A notable specimen of this style of writing has been left us by Mozart. He constructed a comic symphony, in grand style, which is supposed to represent the efforts of a village orchestra to struggle with a good work somewhat beyond its capabilities. Now the horns come in a measure too soon; here the first violins are a measure and a half too late; then the second violins get the accompaniment to one theme, while the first violins play another, and so on. The result to a musician is extremely mirth-provoking, but it is a "caviare to the general." There is, however, a species of composition which appeals to the risibilities of all, while giving pleasure by its excellence as music. Works of this class are known by the title which heads this article, and it is our purpose to give a general description of them, the names of one or two of the best, and the necessary instructions for their performance.

As the title "Kinder-Symphonie" (Children's Symphony) implies, these works are written with reference to their performance, in part or wholly, by children. Doubtless in Germany, where children study music so much younger and more generally than here, this is possible; here it is not. Children of a larger growth will, however, find them interesting and highly amusing, the necessary rehearsals being productive of as much fun for the performers as the completed performance is for their friends.

The first requisite for a "Kinder-Symphonie" is a piano, which must be played by a pretty good pianist. On this instrument as a foundation (sometimes strengthened by a violin and violoncello) the work is built. All the other instruments used are children's toys. A nightingale, a lark, a cuckoo—that is, toys imitating the notes of these birds—a drum, a trumpet, a triangle, sleigh-bells, a toy imitating the crack of a whip, etc., etc., and last, but very far from least, a mirliton. This last mentioned musical toy is not nearly as dreadful as its name; it consists simply of a five or seven inch piece of reed with parchment glued on each end, and with a hole in the side, near the end, into which hole the performer sings, easily and with a natural voice, the notes written for the instrument. When possible, this should be done by a lady, as a female voice sounds much better than a male in the *ensemble*.

The performers being selected, of course the first step is to decide on a symphony. The best we have yet seen are one by Von Holten and one by Chwatal. The latter, entitled "The Sleigh-ride," is the easier of the two and produces rather the most fun; the former contains the better music.

When the symphony is ordered, order also a set of instruments. They come in sets, ready tuned (or nearly), and are not very expensive. The performer must tune his own lark by pouring water into its interior, and should the cuckoo and nightingale not sing in tune, they can also be raised or lowered in pitch a trifle.

The music and instruments having been procured, the performers assembled, the music on the music-stands before each person, the pianist at the piano, and the conductor in front of all with his *baton* for beating the time, the work is ready to begin. The conductor, also an amateur, raises his stick, the pianist places his hands over the keys ready for the first chord, the wind instrument players puff out their cheeks, and the drummer poises his stick in air ready for the opening thwack.

Before permitting the conductor to bring his arm down and start the symphony, we must give a few words of direction to all concerned, and first to

THE CONDUCTOR

himself. The mere matter of beating time is the simplest and least exacting of a conductor's duties. A little prac-

tice will render the wielding of the baton almost a matter of second nature.

There are certain accepted ways of indicating the different divisions of time which it is well to follow, as experience has proved them to be the best and simplest. We give the most common divisions of time and the manner of beating them.

Four-four ($\frac{4}{4}$) time (four beats in a measure). (See Fig.

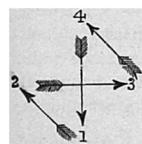


FIG. 1.

1.) Two-two ($\frac{2}{2}$) time (two beats in a measure). (See Fig. 2.) Two-four ($\frac{2}{4}$) time, if slow, is beaten four in a measure, like four-four ($\frac{4}{4}$); if moderate or quick, is beaten two in a measure, like two-two ($\frac{2}{2}$). Three-two ($\frac{3}{2}$) or three-four ($\frac{3}{4}$) time (three in a measure). (See Fig. 3.)

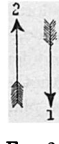


FIG. 2.

There is another method of beating three in a measure by taking the second beat to the *left* instead of to the *right*; but we give the method adopted by the best conductors.

Three-four ($\frac{3}{4}$) time, if very quick, is beaten only one in a measure, the stick simply falling with emphasis upon the first beat in each measure, the players making the rapid sub-divisions for themselves. This remark applies to all *very* rapid movements, as the baton should never be used so quickly that its motions become indistinct.

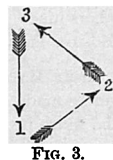


FIG. 3.

Six-eight ($\frac{6}{8}$) or six-four ($\frac{6}{4}$) time (six in a measure) when slow, is beaten either as per Fig. 4 or Fig. 5. When fast, it is beaten like two-two ($\frac{2}{2}$) time (two in a measure) and the players give their three notes to each beat.

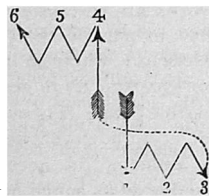


FIG. 4.

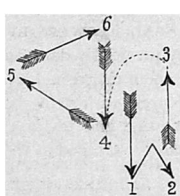


FIG. 5.

entirely by the free motion of the wrist, except in emphatic or very loud (*f*) passages, when the arm may also be used. Much of the beauty and grace of Mr. Theo. Thomas' conducting is due to the observance of this rule.

In addition to his duties as beater of time it is the conductor's place to see that every instrument commences aright after a rest of any length, that no instrument predominates over the rest, unless it may be needed to do so for an effect; that the gradations from *piano* to *forte* are made by all simultaneously; that any instrument having a phrase that some other has had before it shall render that phrase in the same manner as its predecessor, unless special direction to the contrary be given by the composer, and to see that every one of the orchestra shall sink his individuality in the production of the general effect. Relegate solo playing strictly to solo performances.

Above all things, it must be distinctly understood that the conductor is master. From his decision there should be no appeal; in the obeying of his directions, no hesitation. Unless he is worthy of this confidence he is not fitted for his position. Directions to

THE PERFORMERS

can be given to all at once. First and foremost, the strictest and most unremitting attention to the conductor. It troubles amateurs a great deal to follow a conductor; they complain that they cannot see him and look at their music too. The truth is that they forget all about him, most of the time. Any professional orchestra-player will acknowledge that, with his eyes fixed firmly upon a new piece of music, and with all his energies taxed to unravel its difficulties, he sees every motion made by the conductor. This *unconscious* watch and recognition of the leading-stick is, of course, the result of years of habit; but the amateur can quickly attain almost the same result, if he will only at the beginning keep the matter in his mind. After the second or third rehearsal he will astonish himself by discovering that it is quite possible to see one thing while looking at another; and that, by remembering that there is a conductor whom it is his business to follow, he can be perfectly conscious of all that that conductor is about, without removing his eyes from his own music.

The performers can greatly lighten the conductor's labors (sufficiently heavy, as any one may see by reading the directions addressed to him) by paying strict attention, and by observing for themselves the marks of expression which stand in their copies. The great trouble with most people is that they can't and they won't play *softly*. Another trouble is that there is a general delusion that "soft"

means also "slow;" any diminution in strength being almost invariably accompanied by a corresponding slackening of speed. By guarding against these two common faults, at least three rehearsals less will be needed for the successful production of a *Kinder-Symphonie*.

The performers will frequently find in their copies a measure containing only some kind of rest and bearing a figure above. (See cut.)

This means that there are, in that part, nine measures of silence for that instrument. These measures must be carefully counted, one eye (so to speak) being kept on the conductor in order that the performer's count and his beat may be simultaneous; and also that, in case of the performer losing his count (an accident continually happening to amateurs) he may be ready to obey instantly the conductor's indication of his time to play again.

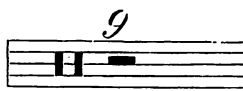


FIG. 6.

In all compositions there are, as all players know, certain passages which tempt the performer to hurry almost unconsciously. This hurrying is a bad fault even in solo playing, but in orchestral or concerted work it is a fatal error, leading inevitably to confusion and smash. In the *Kinder-Symphonie* this temptation is only likely to assail the pianist, violinist and violoncellist; to them, therefore, we especially dedicate this warning. Careful watch of the conductor is the safeguard against this, as against most accidents liable to happen in concerted playing; and this careful watching cannot be too often nor too strenuously insisted upon. Of course, in order that all may watch the conductor, it is necessary that all should be seated so that they can easily see him; this point must be carefully considered when placing the chairs and music desks for the players.

The minuteness of our directions may lead some of our readers to suppose that the getting up of a *Kinder-Symphonie* is a very arduous and difficult labor; we assure them, however, that it is not. The matter once fairly started, everyone concerned will be surprised to see how soon the music seems to "run itself," only our readers are warned that if, deceived by this appearance of internal motive power, they permit it to run itself, they will find themselves landed in a slough of cacophonous confusion. But once let a little *Kinder-Symphonie* party be formed, and put into working trim, and we doubt very much if they ever abandon this form of amusement until forced to do so, either by interfering business or from lack of material to work on.

We should advise our readers to commence their operations with the "Sleighride," by F. X. Chwatal, already mentioned, which can be obtained of any good music dealer who keeps foreign music. From the same person can also be purchased the necessary toy instruments for the players, with instructions for their use.

We think that we have here given all directions necessary for amateurs desiring to commence the amusing study of this class of music; but should further instructions be needed, we shall be happy to answer any questions that may be sent us.

JOHANN STRAUSS.

JOHANN STRAUSS, the popular composer, was born in Vienna in 1825. He comes of a musical family, his father having been the rival of Lanner, celebrated in his day as a composer of waltzes, and achieving almost an equal fame. Both, however, have been eclipsed by the subject of our sketch. The name of Strauss suggests to the mind of the hearer not the father, but the more famous son, while that of Lanner is now known to comparatively few persons except musicians, whose business it is to keep informed about dance music of the better class.

Johann is the eldest of three sons, his brothers being Edward and Joseph. All three are musicians, and all wrote the same class of music in the same style until about eight years ago, when Johann struck out in a new direction, giving to the world his first operetta, "La Reine Indigo." Two years afterwards, in 1873, came "Der Carneval in Rom," an operetta which had not quite so much of success as "Indigo," and in 1874 he hastened to retrieve himself by the production of "Der Fledermaus," which was so great a success, that shortly after its production in Europe it was brought out here by a German company, headed by Miss Lena Mayer. Although its popularity here was not equal to that it met with in Europe, or to that of the Offenbach operas given here, it still drew well enough to be kept on the bills for some time, and to remain the sole novelty of the season. In 1875 came his fourth operetta, "Cagliostro," and towards the end of 1878 his fifth, "Blindeküh," which has just been produced in Europe and has been rather a failure.

In spite of these attempts at a larger class of composition, Johann Strauss is best known and most valued for

his contributions to the realm of dance music, where he reigns supreme. "A Strauss Waltz!" Who does not know the seductive invitation to dance conveyed by the very words? And when the music is heard it is irresistible, the very soul of the dance lives in it. Nor is it only to the lover of the dance that Strauss appeals; many of his works (more especially his polkas and his mazurkas, notably the "Fata Morgana") are the admiration of musicians for the beauty of their construction and orchestration.

The public in general is somewhat confused between the three brothers, a "waltz by Strauss" being merely a "waltz by Strauss" without reference to the fact as to whether it is by Johann, Edward, or Joseph. So nearly alike do the brothers write, that a musician would be sorely puzzled if called upon to decide from internal evidence by which of the three any given waltz had been written. Johann is, however, at once the most second and the most felicitous.

His abilities were early recognized, for before his father's death, in 1849, we find him conducting his own picked band. For many years he held by special appointment of the Emperor of Austria the position of musical director of the court balls. Doubtless many of our readers will remember his visit to America in 1872, at the time of the Boston Peace Jubilee, and the interest caused in New York by his peculiarities of manner in conducting the performance of his own compositions. To see the man was more than to hear him. He stood before his orchestra, violin in hand, and started them with his bow. Now he led, now he played, now he picked out some desired "point" with an unmistakable motion of his bow, anon he stamped and almost danced; but whatever he did he managed to inspire his orchestra and his public with the wildest enthusiasm, and introduced to American audiences a "reading" of his own works which was as novel as it was fascinating.

Besides the five operettas already mentioned, Johann has written over four hundred pieces of dance music, some of them being of considerable length. The introductions to his waltzes, generally omitted in this country, are frequently of great beauty and originality but our impatient dancers would hardly be content to wait while some of the longer ones were being played.

As a proof of the industry of the Strauss family, we might mention that, including the work of the father and three sons, they have given to the world over one thousand musical works.

By the time this number reaches our readers, our ecclesiastical song-birds will have finished their annual nest-changing and settled down into their positions for the coming year. This insane custom of continually upsetting and disintegrating a choir just as it has fairly got into good running order is one of such venerable date, and one so firmly rooted in the traditions of all church music committees, that it appears as though it would be impossible to abolish it by any moderate means. In consequence, we find that many churches, whose ministers have brains in their heads and will enough to carry out the reforms those brains suggest, are doing away with the old style of quartet choir entirely, and adopting in its place the much more appropriate and majestic chorus choir. The great expense attending the formation and continuation of a chorus choir renders it necessary that these choirs should be largely, if not entirely, volunteer; and, of course, these volunteers are almost exclusively amateurs. Professionals can rarely afford to give their Sundays away.

Every musician loves, in his heart, a good chorus better than the finest quartet that ever piped distorted opera to sacred words; consequently, this change would be hailed with delight by every really worthy organist in spite of the immense amount of work it throws upon him, were it not that these volunteers are frequently so exceedingly uncertain. They rarely seem to comprehend that their proposal to sing in the choir is really a tacit promise to attend the rehearsals and services for which that choir is demanded; and any feeble temptation to absence—a slight indisposition, a little bad weather, some attractive public performance or social gathering—is considered an all-sufficient excuse for non-attendance.

THE six hundred and forty-three churches in New York and Brooklyn, of which three hundred and eighty-two are in the metropolis, employ over three thousand paid vocalists and organists to conduct the musical part of their services. It is estimated that there are at least ten times this number of persons "out" of situations, and eagerly watching the "musical" columns in the daily papers in the hope of securing an engagement. One church which advertised for a quartet received five hundred and forty answers, and an advertisement for an organist called forth nearly a hundred.